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President: Mr. Deiss ..... (Switzerland)

The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

General debate

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Wilfred Elrington, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belize.

Mr. Elrington (Belize): Please permit me, Sir, on behalf of the Belize delegation to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly. As much as our peoples share common values of peace and democracy, your country and my own could not be more different. Switzerland is landlocked with a land mass twice the size and a population 25 times that of my coastal country. Belize has a $1 billion economy and Switzerland has a $400 billion economy. Nominal gross domestic product per capita in Switzerland is estimated at $67,000, while in Belize that figure is roughly $4,000.

I bring up the differences between Belize and Switzerland because they are illustrative of the stark differences that epitomize today's world. We in this Hall tout sovereign equality, but we experience social and economic disparity on a daily basis, across the globe. Inequality persists between nations and within nations. Poverty proliferates in the midst of plenty.

In my own country, although real output per capita grew over the past 10 years, so too did the proportion of Belizeans living in poverty. In other words, we experienced growth without the commensurate development of our people.

Belize accepts that development is a matter of national responsibility. However, our contemporary reality now renders questions that were hitherto matters of national concern, matters of global concern. As a consequence of globalization, the management capacity of a State has diminished. Our macroeconomic policy and fiscal capacity cannot adequately address the multiple exogenous shocks occasioned, inter alia, by the triumvirate of the financial, food and fuel crises.

Adequate and appropriate international support at this time is therefore critical if we are to avoid drifting further and further away from the attainment of our development goals. In that connection, developed nations urgently need to make good their promise to deliver 0.7 per cent of their GDP for official development assistance (ODA).

For Belize, meaningful international support is becoming increasingly harder to come by because of our designation as a middle-income country. While we continue to benefit from ODA and foreign direct investment in our quest to further integrate Belize into the global economy, for the most part expensive foreign and local commercial debt has in fact fuelled the country's development strategy.

Thus, in the past 15 years, Belize has built up a high level of public debt, with high-cost long-term financing. The ratio of public debt to GDP grew steadily, from about 27 per cent in 1995 to 70.3 per cent in 2008, with a peak of 87 per cent in 2005. That

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debt-led strategy, which was the model of many other countries, will surely become an unwelcome and unwanted burden for our children.

Perennial debt-servicing obligations constrain my Government's capacity to increase social investments, especially in those areas where they are most needed. It is therefore not surprising that Belize finds itself off track in meeting Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on poverty, hunger, education and the empowerment of women. Considering the synergies between Goals, slippage in one threatens the achievement of others.

The terms of engagement between international financial institutions and middle-income countries must be revised if countries such as my own are to break away from the vicious cycle of debt-led development. While those terms will necessarily have to provide for suitable risk-mitigation strategies, they should not be so burdensome as to constrain our policy space. They must respect the national ownership of our development initiatives. International cooperation and support therefore must complement, rather than dictate, the way forward.

While Belize's traditional donors have long provided valuable assistance, for which we will always be grateful, we are now benefiting from new modalities of cooperation, which are yielding more direct and immediate returns for our people. Belize's cooperation experience with Taiwan exemplifies a model of cooperation based on partnership. With the help of the Government of Taiwan, Belize has steadily developed its capacity in agricultural research, aquaculture, education and social-sector investment.

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, cooperation has long been based on that approach. Belize has benefited immensely from partnerships with Cuba, Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela. Of special significance is the cooperation in the health sector. In fact, today the progress that we can claim on the health-related MDGs is a testament, in part, to those partnerships.

Beyond our hemispheric relations, we are forging new partnerships. We recently received two years' worth of emergency relief materials from the United Arab Emirates, for which we are most appreciative, given the frequency of hurricane visitations to our shores in recent years. Through those partnerships, Belize is being enabled to pursue its broader national development objectives. Our experience is being replicated the world over, as we see in other examples of South-South cooperation. We need now to make those partnerships the standard for global cooperation.

At the United Nations, we have long focused on official development assistance as being synonymous with global partnerships. That myopic view needs to be broadened, and we must disabuse ourselves of the donor-driven dialectic. The United Nations has the responsibility to craft a new orientation, from a donor-recipient culture to one of true partnership with mutual respect.

As every speaker in this debate has emphasized, in order for this institution to meet that challenge, it must itself reform.

Current decision-making structures and organization tend towards a North-South polarity. That dynamic imperils cooperation and renders debate more ceremony than meaningful dialogue. Over the 65 years of the United Nations existence, our world has changed. We are dealing with new realities. The Organization is nearly universal, with 192 countries represented here. The club of nuclear-power States has expanded, and may yet continue to expand. Global integration has deepened with technology, market liberalization and the freer movement of capital. Our interdependence has generated global systemic risks.

We need a United Nations that reflects more equitable North-South representation and that can effectively deliver. That means that the organs of the United Nations must be reformed. The process of decision-making must ensure coherence and be inclusive. Above all, equity and justice must inform our mechanisms for delivery. The reform we seek goes much deeper than the changing of the guards; it is a reform that would rebuild trust among each other and confidence in the system.

Belize is crafting a twenty-first century vision for a modern, green and sustainable economy predicated on capacity-building, human dignity, human development and innovation. Our Government is working towards building domestic capital through social investments, job creation, improved access to credit and combating crime and violence.

To that end, we have launched project Restore Belize, which encompasses a comprehensive anti-crime initiative complemented by a socio-economic

component aimed at restoring the social fabric of our society through the provision of skills training, continuing education for adults, infrastructure development and fostering civic pride. We have instituted school feeding programmes, subsidies for students of secondary schools, seed programmes for farmers and capitalization of our own development finance corporation for onward lending to entrepreneurs.

The Government has also undertaken a national multiparty and multisectoral consultative process to redefine our national development objectives in our Horizon 2030 project. In addition, the Prime Minister has established a council of science advisers to better inform the Horizon 2030 process on the integration of science and technology in the national development agenda.

Belize is resolutely embracing its responsibility for its national development. Our efforts are aimed towards ensuring that we achieve the type of development that genuinely affords all our people the opportunity to realize their true potential with dignity. To that end, we seek only empathy and partnership from the United Nations, not charity.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. S. M. Krishna, Minister for External Affairs of India.

Mr. Krishna (India): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly and by assuring you of the full cooperation of my delegation. In the interest of saving the Assembly's valuable time, I will read out only part of my address, the full text of which has been circulated.

The United Nations was created, 65 years ago, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to affirm faith in fundamental rights, to establish conditions under which respect for international law can be maintained and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. Six and a half decades later, globalization has made the world a much smaller place. It has also created conditions whereby the problems and challenges of one country or region can very quickly become those of the larger community of nations.

Terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, maritime piracy, pandemics and epidemics, organized crime and narcotics smuggling recognize no borders or boundaries. Similarly, the fallout of intra-State conflicts, failed States, climate change, natural disasters, food shortages and financial and economic crises transcend countries and regions. Under those circumstances the international community looks to the United Nations to overcome the common challenges of humankind through the harmonized actions of nations, as stated in the Charter.

The United Nations is the only organization that can be at the centre of an international governance system. However, it needs urgent reform to reflect contemporary realities and to effectively meet emerging global challenges. The first step has to be the reform of the Security Council. The overwhelming majority of the membership has been clear in seeking an expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. It is imperative that we bring the negotiations to an early and logical conclusion.

We must also truly revitalize the General Assembly. It must reclaim its position on vital matters such as the appointment of the Secretary-General and the relationship between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. Along with the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly should also set the paradigms of multilateral engagement for the global economy and for development and developmental cooperation.

It is matter of much satisfaction that this year we have significantly advanced the United Nations reform agenda in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment. I wish to reiterate our strong commitment to UN Women and to its strengthening.

We also need to ensure that the review of the Human Rights Council this year adds to the Council's role as an effective, credible and premier United Nations mechanism dealing with human rights.

My Government accords the highest priority to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Our development challenges were exacerbated by the financial and economic crisis that started in 2008. Acting in concert, the Group of 20 (G-20), which includes the largest developed and developing countries, reacted promptly and purposefully to stem the global slowdown and send a strong message of confidence and stability. India believes that the G-20 — the premier forum for international economic

cooperation — can help catalyse strong, balanced and sustainable growth for the benefit of everyone.

As a country vulnerable to, and already suffering from, the impacts of climate change, India has an important stake in the success of ongoing international negotiations in that regard. There is no substitute to the United Nations-led process, with its inherent inclusiveness and transparency, to lead us to an ambitious and equitable outcome that respects the provisions and principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It is important that there be acceptance of equal sharing of the resource of the atmosphere for all human beings.

India has an abiding commitment to achieve universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament within a specified time frame — a vision that was most eloquently articulated in the Assembly by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1988. More than two decades later, that goal still remains distant. Meanwhile, newer threats have emerged, including the danger of terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

India introduced a working paper on nuclear disarmament in 2006, which contained specific proposals that reflect the spirit and substance of the Rajiv Gandhi action plan. We call for an intensification of discussion and dialogue among Member States and the larger non-governmental community, so as to strengthen an international consensus that can be translated into concrete action to achieve nuclear disarmament.

India remains committed to the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty that meets India's national security interests. We hope that the Conference will be able to commence negotiations at an early date. We remain committed to a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear-explosives testing.

Terrorism has emerged as one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. To defeat it, it is imperative for the global community to build on international cooperation and take concerted action against terrorists and their sponsors. There can be no justification for terrorism, just as there can be no good or bad terrorists. We urge Member States to display the necessary political will to finalize and adopt the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Peace and stability in South Asia is one of our highest priorities. We are committed to good-neighbourly relations with all our neighbours, including Pakistan. In that spirit of solidarity with the people of Pakistan in their hour of need we pledged $25 million in aid, which is being channelled through the United Nations for flood relief efforts in that country. As a neighbour, we wish to provide succour and relief in a timely manner to the victims of that natural disaster. We are saddened by the loss of life and property that Pakistan has suffered as a result of the unprecedented floods.

It is well known that many countries have deep-rooted concerns about the growth and consolidation of militancy and terrorism in Pakistan. We share those concerns, particularly because Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India, has been the target of such Pakistan-sponsored militancy and terrorism for many years now. Pakistan must fulfil its solemn commitment not to allow territory under its control to be used for terrorism directed against India. Credible and firm action by Pakistan against terrorist groups operating from its soil is in the interest of the region, as it is in Pakistan's own interest.

Pakistan cannot impart lessons to us on democracy and human rights. If, however, Pakistan were to live up to its commitment not to allow the use of territory under its control by terrorists acting against India, that would significantly help reduce the trust deficit that impedes the development of better bilateral relations between our two countries. We are neighbours, and as neighbours we have an obligation to work together.

Afghanistan recently successfully concluded parliamentary elections. We believe the international community needs to be steadfast in its engagement with Afghanistan to ensure the success of its reconstruction efforts and its emergence as a democratic, pluralistic and prosperous society. The continuing existence of safe havens and sanctuaries for terrorists beyond Afghanistan's borders is the major impediment to the restoration of peace and security in Afghanistan. That should be a primary focus of the international community.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, said in 1948:

> "The fundamental principles on which the United Nations is based are right principles. We believe in those fundamental principles and want to help the Organization in following these principles."

The Government and the more than 1 billion people of India have stood by that commitment. I would like to solemnly reaffirm our faith in the principles that underlie the United Nations, and in the United Nations system itself.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Luis Almagro, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay.

Mr. Almagro (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our goals at the national level are goals we also want to see achieved in the international community. They are goals that the international community must tackle as priorities. They include eradicating indigence and reducing and eliminating poverty and its root causes, as well as ensuring a dignified life and favourable working conditions for all. We also want an international system that is more democratic and efficient. We want the issues that I have mentioned to be resolved through cross-cutting policies. We can work to promote democracy in every country of the system, but we are badly off indeed if the law of the strongest prevails in the overall system.

Uruguay will always take a moral and ethical approach to every issue, whether with regard to the environment, human rights or international security. In every instance, the ultimate guide is the human person. We must in the end, therefore, always rely on our conscience. However, the functioning of the system is crucial, for that is what generates social, territorial and gender inequality.

At the outset, we welcome the election of the Argentine Republic as Chair of the Group of 77 and China. Argentina is a brotherly country that shares common principles and values with us.

Uruguay, in keeping with its historical path and traditions, reaffirms its commitment to the principles of international law. I would like to underscore in particular our firm support for the peaceful solution of conflicts; the sovereign equality of States; the principles of non-intervention and of the self-determination of peoples; respect for human rights; international socio-economic cooperation; and multilateralism. The maximum expression of those principles is to be found in this Organization.

I would also like to express our rejection of the use or the threat of use of force, of terrorism and of all types of violence, and of the application of coercive measures in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations, such as the economic, financial and trade embargo against Cuba by the United States, which we firmly reject. That unilateral measure is contrary, not only to the Charter but also to international law and to one of the most dearly held principles of my country's foreign policy, namely, the peaceful settlements of disputes.

Uruguay is party to the principal international conventions relating to the environment and sustainable development. Thus, we have reaffirmed our responsibility for the protection of the environment as a human right and a fundamental component for achieving truly sustainable development.

Uruguay has a long history of defending, promoting and protecting human rights and international humanitarian law. Those principles are a central priority of the State, enshrined in the traditional pillars of the Republic's foreign policy, which constitute the political and institutional foundations of the country. We welcome the progress made this year in Kampala, Uganda, which has led to the strengthening of the regime established under the Statute of the International Criminal Court. Uruguay is among the countries that have subscribed to the widest range of conventions in the area of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Uruguay's long-standing tradition of defending those principles has allowed us to take a leading role in, among other areas, the protection and promotion of the rights of children. We believe it is vitally important that we continue to focus our efforts to promote the defence and protection of children and to ensure their well-being.

We also reaffirm our full support for the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system. In that respect, we welcome the adoption of the resolution (resolution 64/289) on the coherence of the United Nations system, which, in particular, created the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. We would also like to express our satisfaction with the appointment of

Ms. Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, as Under-Secretary-General for UN Women. We are confident that her experience will serve as a vital asset for the new Entity.

Uruguay has a steadfast commitment to the cause of peace and our country's foreign policy bears testimony to that fact. We have given decisive support to all measures aimed at the elimination of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. We have also advocated the control and reduction of conventional weapons. We underscore, once again, the importance of the swift universal implementation of these agreements.

Likewise, and without prejudice to the reaffirmation of our hope to see a Nuclear Weapons Convention, we believe that the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and a fissile material cut-off treaty during the present year, would constitute decisive steps in the consolidation and deepening of the progress made in the area of disarmament. We must not stop, because to stop is to go backwards, and to go backwards is to expose humanity to the horrendous and unacceptable risk of nuclear holocaust.

It is our hope that, in 2012, a conference will be held, without further delay or conditions, in which all of the States of the Middle East will participate, with the aim of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, free of all other weapons of mass destruction as well, through freely agreed arrangements between the States of the region, with the full support and commitment of those States that possess nuclear weapons. Similarly, Uruguay supports the Secretary-General's five-point initiative for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Uruguay actively participates in the United Nations multilateral system of peacekeeping and maintenance of international security, as well as in efforts to defend human rights and uphold international humanitarian law through peacekeeping operations, based on our conviction that these are a solid testimony to the collective commitment of the international community as a whole. That commitment on the part of my country can be seen both on the ground, through our deployment of more than 2,500 Blue Helmets, deployed principally in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in its work on the political level here at Headquarters.

We recognize that the Security Council holds the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. But we believe it is extremely important to promote a closer relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. The greater the distance between them, the more difficult it is for peacekeeping operations to achieve their objectives and for their complex mandates to be effectively implemented.

In this respect, the existing gap between the complexity of the mandates and the resources available poses a challenge that we must confront every day. We are convinced that is of fundamental importance for us to ensure that adequate consideration is given to the allocation of the resources needed for the proper functioning of those operations. The conditions offered by the system also need to be updated, so that the United Nations has at its disposal the equipment and human resources that it needs. That subject affects developing countries in particular, since it is they which provide the large majority of the troops and thus the viability of their participation in missions is at stake.

The case of Haiti probably provides one of the best illustrations of the need for a cross-cutting political effort to lift a country out of a situation of crisis and institutional and social stagnation.

Uruguay has never been indifferent to the challenges that this brotherly country has had to confront and continues to confront today. From 2004 to date, we have deployed more than 10,000 military personnel to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, who have faithfully carried out the mandate approved by the Security Council for the stabilization process in that country.

In its role as coordinator of the Group of Friends of Haiti, Uruguay has for some years been advocating for a mandate that, without neglecting the urgent security needs, permits at the same time the establishment of the conditions necessary for strengthening the productive capacity of the country, which was seriously affected by the earthquake of 12 January 2010.

In our view, greater emphasis should be placed on providing teachers, doctors, engineers, agronomists, experts in information technologies and volunteer workers, who could contribute effectively to solving the problems of the Haitian population. Investing in

human resources in Haiti is of fundamental importance for the future development of the country.

Over the past two years, there has been an open process of restructuring the peacekeeping system, which was necessary given the new reality that we are facing. That process must be viewed as part of a larger project of reform of the Organization, which, through various initiatives, seeks to be more effective, to work in a more coordinated manner and to enjoy greater legitimacy.

Uruguay reiterates its adherence to that process of reform of the United Nations. The process, begun during the 2005 Summit, which gave rise to the creation of two new structures within the Organization — the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission — should be brought to completion through the consideration of various outstanding topics, including the reform of the Security Council. The current international reality is such that that body needs to be more representative and democratic. We must therefore take steps to effect its expansion, while guarding against an extension of the historical obstacles that run contrary to the principle of the sovereign equality of States, such as the right of veto.

A very clear example of Uruguay's commitment to the United Nations reform process, which seeks to establish greater effectiveness and coordination within the system, is its direct participation in the "Delivering as One" programme. Three years after the pilot programme was launched in Uruguay, we have recently completed the country evaluation and can affirm that the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the process have contributed to the national Government's efforts to strengthen the coordination among the various State bodies through a joint programming exercise, which made possible greater interaction between agencies, the Government and the United Nations system.

Uruguay has formally expressed its aspiration to occupy a seat as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2016-2017. We are the only candidate country in the region at the present time. Since its accession to the United Nations as a founding Member and despite having pursued a foreign policy inspired by the same purposes, principles and ideals enshrined in the United Nations Charter, Uruguay has occupied a seat in the Security Council only once, which was during the period 1965-1966.

Presenting one's candidacy to the body in which the international community has entrusted the current global collective security system constitutes the most demanding test of a State's foreign policy. In the present context, which is profoundly marked by multiple global crises, it is imperative that we work jointly towards building long-term strategies and solutions that will lead us to more just and equitable societies.

In that regard, the role of the United Nations in international economic and financial governance is fundamental in terms of democratizing decision-making and ensuring equal participation in global decisions that affect us all and directly impact strategic planning in the short, medium and long term. Coordinated, transparent and harmonious decision-making is essential for achieving tangible results that improve the living conditions and situation of the world's citizens. Our country deems it important to promote dialogue in order to foster bridge-building among the various decision-making forums.

We must be aware that without a healthy natural environment, all other development efforts will have a limited effect. In that context, the global phenomenon of climate change is perhaps the most urgent and dramatic challenge currently facing humanity. It poses additional challenges to development and forces us to urgently consider the need to implement measures to adapt to and mitigate its adverse effects. Such measures require changes in production methods and seriously compromise the distribution of domestic resources.

Achieving sustainable development that takes into account the economic, social and environmental dimensions is fundamental to ensuring long-term results and a healthy environment for present and future generations as well as sustained economic growth. That goal is also a necessary precondition for reducing disparities between the developed world and the developing world, particularly in the quality of life, income distribution and human development indicators.

In closing, Uruguay would like to reaffirm the imperative necessity of renewed political commitment aimed at achieving an open and equitable multilateral trade system based on clear rules that would permit all countries to benefit from the potential provided by international trade as the engine of development.

Hunger eradication, food production and agricultural trade are closely related and must be strengthened through a predictable multilateral system that provides guarantees to producers and ensures food availability to the most vulnerable sectors. In that context, the elimination of subsidies and other non-tariff barriers that hinder access to markets is essential, as is a successful conclusion of the Doha Round based on a development perspective.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marie Kacou Gervais, Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Kacou Gervais (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your brilliant election to the presidency of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. That election is a sign of the unanimous recognition of your personal commitment to promote the role of this Organization and to defend its ideals. It is also the crowning moment in a talented diplomatic career that you have led with skill and tact. It is therefore to you as a skilled diplomat that I would like to pay warm homage.

It is also my pleasure to express to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, my delegation's appreciation for the quality of the work he undertook and the results achieved under his presidency. Finally, allow me to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his personal commitment and tireless efforts to support peace and development throughout the world. Furthermore, I wish to convey my deep gratitude to him as well as the gratitude of His Excellency Mr. Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, as well as that of the people and Government of Côte d'Ivoire for his commitment to reach a settlement of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

By proposing the theme of reaffirming the United Nations central role in global governance for this session, Mr. President, you celebrate the primacy of multilateralism over unilateralism as a method for managing global affairs in the best possible manner. Moreover, you are transforming our Organization into the forum of choice for dealing with issues of global concern. That vision is, without any doubt, in line with that of developing countries in general and my country, Côte d'Ivoire, in particular and can only take shape if the United Nations retains its credibility by adapting to an international context that has considerably changed since its founding in 1945. This requires urgent and thorough reform, because we believe that our Organization has resisted the widespread changes in the world that it was established to serve.

Because the United Nations is at the crossroads of all of the world's problems, it is here that we can fully assess what has happened since it was founded. This is the appropriate place to assess the progress achieved as well as the failings. It is also here that we can envisage solutions to problems that now confront the world. Those issues include poverty, which is the source of all evils, and which remains an open wound on humanity, which continues to make progress to the point where it is already considering human settlements on the moon. But unfortunately, at the same time, humanity is forgetting that more than a billion men and women across the planet Earth suffer from hunger. Women's lives are lost as they give life. Millions of children die before reaching the age of 5, and access to drinking water is limited in Africa. The AIDS epidemic and the malaria epidemic kill more people than all the wars combined. If the world is powerless, the United Nations must be adapted to provide proper responses to those imbalances, because there are not two worlds, there is just one world, which is our common heritage. Managing that world must be done in a joint manner, and it must be shared equitably. The United Nations must demonstrate the example and show the path forward.

In that regard, my country's position has remained unchanged. For Côte d'Ivoire, that long-sought reform must aim for balance in the main bodies of the United Nations, including in particular a larger Security Council and improvement in its working methods. That is why my delegation places much hope in the successful outcome of the intergovernmental negotiations that were launched by the General Assembly on reform of the Organization in general and the Security Council in particular.

This session of the Assembly is taking place at a moment when the global economy is beginning a fragile recovery, following the most serious economic crisis the world has faced since the Great Depression of the 1930s. That crisis has shown, and indeed has exacerbated, the vulnerability of integrated world economies, ruined development efforts and threatened collective security. Many countries, mainly developing countries, are continuing to suffer the effects of the

crisis through a drop in the purchasing power of their people, the growing shortage of official development assistance, falling foreign direct investment and growth in unemployment.

If, as the experts tell us, the global economy has begun to recover this year, it nevertheless continues to be fragile, with a growth rate of a mere 2.2 per cent. In such a situation, we must seek, in solidarity and by combining our efforts, the most appropriate solutions to consolidate that tendency to growth. Meeting that fundamental requirement will allow us to establish throughout the world societies that are safer, more equitable, more inclusive and more stable.

My delegation therefore calls on the industrialized countries to make a reality of their commitments with regard to developing countries, especially in terms of official development assistance, if the developing countries are to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

Côte d'Ivoire also hopes to see the diligent implementation of the conclusions of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, which was held here from 24 to 26 June 2009, particularly those calling for reform and strengthening of the financial and economic system and of the international financial architecture in order to adapt them to current difficulties. It also desires that that reform should not only allow developing countries in general and those of Africa in particular to have more adequate representation in international financial institutions, but should also promote economic and financial policies that are better adapted to their needs.

Along those lines, I would like to pay tribute to the summit of the Group of Eight (G-8) held in June 2010 in Muskoka, Canada, which reaffirmed, inter alia, the commitments of the G-8 with regard to official development assistance and the guarantee of aid effectiveness. It called for the effective mobilization of all public and private resources for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It also emphasized the urgent need for collective action to achieve the MDGs, particularly improvement in maternal health and reduction of infant mortality.

On that specific point, my delegation would like to welcome the creation within the United Nations system of UN Women, a special body responsible for gender issues and the advancement of women. That new body and the establishment of a trust fund to support initiatives for women is a real cause for hope for developing countries, particularly those in Africa, in their struggle against poverty, discrimination and social inequalities. In that connection, I wish to warmly congratulate Ms. Michelle Bachelet on her appointment to head UN Women and assure her of the full cooperation of the authorities of Côte d'Ivoire in fulfilling her mandate.

Food insecurity, which now affects more than 1 billion people, mainly in developing countries, is a major and immediate obstacle to development and a threat to world peace and security.

In the face of that situation, for which the entire international community is responsible, we need to find innovative, effective and lasting solutions in terms of financing for agriculture. My delegation welcomes the efforts being made by the World Bank, regional development banks and the specialized funds and agencies of the United Nations for financing the agricultural sector. Similarly, it welcomes the launching in 2009 of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, which allowed the G-8 to mobilize $22 billion to finance agriculture in developing countries over a period of three years.

The delegation of Côte d'Ivoire welcomes, finally, the reform under way of the Committee on World Food Security and the launching of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme.

Similarly, I would like to recall the proposals made by President Laurent Gbagbo, at the meeting of the Group of 77 and China that was held in June 2008 at Yamoussoukro, to set up a mutual support mechanism for providing food products to importing countries by producing countries while aiming to create in the United Nations a stabilization fund for food products.

Climate change is rightly seen as a global problem and today represents a serious threat to humankind's equilibrium. It therefore requires clear and committed responses at the international level. Thus it is important that we rapidly find solutions that can ensure that future generations will have a world that is better balanced and guarantees a better future for humankind.

In that regard, the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the significant progress of the United

Nations Conference on Climate Change, held from 7 to 18 December 2009 in Copenhagen. Although the principle of a legally binding accord to succeed the Kyoto Protocol after 2012 was not reached, the hopes promoted by that meeting largely justified its being held. Moreover, the significant progress achieved confirms us in that opinion.

Among the advances made we would mention, inter alia, the consensus on the goals for stabilizing the temperature rise at 2°C, the creation of a mechanism to mobilize financial resources for the absorption of greenhouse gas emissions by forests, and the commitment of developed countries to provide $30 billion for the period 2010 to 2012, and $100 billion as of 2020 for measures to adapt to climate change in developing countries.

The diligent implementation of those measures should allow vulnerable States such as my own to establish plans to combat climate change, which is becoming increasingly evident throughout the world in an upsurge in natural disasters related to drought, flooding and coastal erosion. The effects of all of those events on the health of populations and on the availability of land and potable water compromise the economic and social development of many States that have already been weakened by poverty and pandemics. The United Nations, in line with its Charter, has the duty to carry out the negotiations that were begun in Copenhagen and must work resolutely to that end.

Respect for human rights is a concern for my country, which has endorsed the set of international instruments in that regard. Though it was affected by the socio-political crisis, the human rights situation in my country is today on a path to normalization, thanks especially to the valuable help of national and international non-governmental organizations involved in that area. The international community could see that on 3 December 2009 in Geneva, when the Working Group on the universal periodic review took up Côte d'Ivoire. That review led to the adoption on 18 March 2010 of a final report that earned my country the support and encouragement of the States members of the Human Rights Council for our stated will to pursue efforts to improve human rights.

The persistence of numerous armed conflicts around the world continues to threaten international peace and security. Once again, the role of the United Nations is vital to resolving those conflicts, which are hindering the harmonious development of the world. That is particularly true in Africa, a region that, shaken by hotbeds of tension, cannot ensure its peaceful economic and social development, despite its enormous potential.

In that regard, allow me to stress how happy we are that the peace so much hoped for is now a reality in Côte d'Ivoire, following the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, which will permit the organization of free, transparent and open elections. The first round of presidential elections has been set for 31 October 2010. Besides setting that date, the signing on 9 September 2010 of a presidential decree finalizing the ballot list allows for the distribution of national identity and voting cards to the 5,725,720 Ivorians who are on the list that has been validated by the Independent Electoral Commission and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Those signs of progress in the peace process and the proven determination of political players and the Ivorian people to move towards free, open and transparent elections allow us to envisage, with optimism, the holding of the presidential election on the appointed date and thus of Côte d'Ivoire emerging from its crisis.

On that hopeful note, I would like to conclude by recalling that the various crises of security, food, energy and finances, compounded by the threat of climate change, demonstrate the extent to which in the existence, balance and future development of humanity are now threatened more than ever. In that context the United Nations has a crucial role to play in strengthening indispensable international solidarity and in seeking effective, collective and appropriate solutions to those crises and challenges.

However, to be fully engaged with its time and to remain true to the objectives of its founding 65 years ago, the United Nations must adapt to the realities of the contemporary world if it wants to remain the guarantor of international peace and security and of the world's socio-economic development. To that end, we must strengthen the foundations of this Organization and — as the theme of this session invites us to do — reaffirm its central role in global governance. Côte d'Ivoire therefore calls for international solidarity so that our common Organization may find the necessary

solutions to offer to coming generations the hope of a fruitful and peaceful future.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Mr. Mesfin (Ethiopia): Allow me, Sir, at the outset, to extend to you my delegation's warm congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation in the discharge of your high responsibilities. My delegation would like to register our appreciation to the outgoing President, Mr. Ali Treki, for his able leadership during the sixty-fourth session. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for his tireless efforts to ensure that the Organization lives up to the purposes and principles set out in its Charter.

Allow me to begin my statement today by reviewing some salient aspects of the political and economic transformation in Ethiopia.

Such a review should of necessity begin with the democratization process in Ethiopia, which is now almost completing its second decade. In the political transformation in Ethiopia over the past two decades, our single-minded focus has been on building institutions of democracy, good governance and the rule of law. The essence of all our endeavours in that regard has been the devolution of power to the people. Our federal democratic order, built on the basis of unity in diversity, has laid the foundation for lasting peace and security. The democratization process that Ethiopia has embarked on is irreversible and is taking deep root at the level of the State and the society at large.

Still, a democratization process in any country is not an end in itself. The whole purpose is to create an environment conducive to bringing about a better life for the people. That inevitably leads me to our economic policy and strategy. Today in our country accelerated development is in full swing, while a democratic culture and its institutional underpinnings are developing at the grass-roots level.

The successful results achieved during the last seven years and the challenges and experience gained in the process of implementing the previous five-year economic plan have helped in the formulation of the next five-year plan — officially called the Growth and Transformation Plan — covering the period of 2011 to 2015. The objective of that plan is to lay the necessary basis for nation-building by creating and strengthening a stable, democratic, developmental State and to achieve the economic and social goals in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

At the end of the five-year period the net result of all our efforts will be that poverty in our country has been made history. We are confident that by that time our people will celebrate, together with the international community, the end of an era of food insecurity and dependency on food aid. That historic event will give us an opportunity to extend our deep gratitude to all our partners for their assistance in our difficult times. We pledge to redouble our efforts and utilize their assistance for rapid development of our country that will extricate us from food insecurity once and for all.

As regards the Millennium Development Goals, the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, held here in New York just last week, was timely. The outcome document of that forum (resolution 65/1) should not be just an appeal but a new pact, binding on stakeholders with respect to renewed commitment to ensure that the collective promises made at the dawn of the new millennium are kept. The action agenda designed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 must ensure the mutual responsibility and accountability of all stakeholders.

We in Ethiopia have made substantial progress on all fronts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We have taken full charge of our destiny, devised our own strategy and maximized the mobilization of our domestic resources to achieve the MDGs. The results so far have been very encouraging. Over the past seven years, the Ethiopian economy has performed well, having achieved an annual average growth rate of 11.6 per cent. The robust economic growth we have achieved has created the basis for similarly robust growth in social indicators, and hence on progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Assessing the state of the MDGs today would not be complete without some reflections on Africa from the perspective of economic and social development

and its organic link to the MDGs. In that connection, I can do no better than to refer to what Mr. Zoellick, President of the World Bank, said at the High-level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs (see A/65/PV.3). The most important point he made was that he believed in Africa and that Africa can be a global pole of growth and attract investment on African terms. That is what we have been saying all along. He also said that one needs to work with developing countries as clients, not as development models from textbooks, and to help them to solve problems, not to test theories. We in Africa know what we can do; we want to know what the rest of the world will do to help us achieve our goals.

The issue of climate change remains among the most critical challenges facing humankind today. Much has been said, from Rio to Kyoto to Copenhagen. What has been promised has thus far resulted in far less than the urgency of the matter merits. We believe that time is running out, and we are concerned that national agendas of zero-sum preferences are overshadowing the real urgency of addressing the matter in an accelerated and coordinated manner. The upcoming Cancún meeting on climate change should be different from its predecessors. It should come up with a legally binding commitment, coupled with the political will, to allocate the necessary resources for adaptation and mitigation efforts, especially for the most vulnerable and exposed countries.

On energy and development, it has always been self-evident that access to energy is key to fighting poverty. It is central to development. Yet, 1.4 billion people worldwide are without electricity, 80 per cent of whom live in rural areas. Given the urgency of this dire situation, we fully support the goal of universal energy access by 2030, as set by the United Nations.

As the prevalence of conflicts around the world clearly indicates, international cooperation is of paramount importance to complement the efforts of the United Nations in the area of peace and security. In that regard, Ethiopia, as a founding Member of the United Nations, has always been at the forefront in discharging its responsibilities in the area of peace and security. Since the early 1950s, Ethiopia has been an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping operations. At the moment, Ethiopia is among the major troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Among the challenges that the international community faces in the area of peace and security is the scourge of terrorism. Like many other countries, we have been at the receiving end of this problem. We believe that unreserved international cooperation is the only viable way to combat terrorism. Ethiopia will continue to do its level best in that regard.

Any discussion of peace and security on the international scene today will inevitably have to take up the situation in the Horn of Africa. It is regrettable that we still cannot talk about the situation in Somalia with a great deal of optimism. On one hand, the threat of extremism continues unabated in Somalia, as does the danger posed by international terrorist networks and their sponsors to Somalia, and beyond. On the other hand, it is clear that there is little chance for making progress in Somalia until there is harmony and greater seriousness of purpose at the highest level within the Transitional Federal Institutions of Somalia.

The Council of Ministers of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which met here in New York on 22 September preceding the mini-summit on Somalia convened by the Secretary-General on 23 September, expressed its regret with regard to differences within the leadership of the Transitional Federal Government. It called upon them to strengthen their cohesion and work together to address the multiple challenges facing the country. Furthermore, the Council of Ministers reaffirmed the Djibouti process as the sole basis for peace and reconciliation in Somalia, expressed concern about the proliferation of initiatives and urged the United Nations and other stakeholders to engage within the region and with IGAD.

With regard to the situation in the Sudan, Ethiopia is of the firm view that conceivably there is no other conflict on the continent today comparable to that of the Sudan. Hence, we believe that success in the Sudan will mean significant success for Africa as a whole. By the same token, failure may entail a serious catastrophe for Africa. That is why the African Union has given its unreserved attention to the issue, as illustrated by the effort of the High-Level Implementation Panel led by former President Thabo Mbeki. We would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for holding a timely high-level meeting on the Sudan here on 24 September. The outcome of the meeting has been encouraging.

It goes without saying that the referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei should be held on time and strictly in conformity with the terms of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. However, we believe that, irrespective of the outcome of the referendums and without in any way detracting from the historic significance of that date, the parties should not fix their minds solely on 9 January 2011. The parties ought to recognize that here are several commonalities, interests, bonds and values between the peoples of the Sudan, north and south, that transcend the decision to be taken in January 2011. That is why it is of paramount importance that negotiations on post-referendum issues should be conducted in earnest and with the seriousness of purpose that the issues deserve.

When we talk of security in the Horn of Africa region and the southern Red Sea, we cannot avoid raising our concern once again about the destructive role that the Government of Eritrea has continued to play since independence. We in the IGAD region have time and time again warned the United Nations, as well as the international community, that the Eritrean regime is the principal destabilizer in our subregion, with its utter contempt for international law and the norms of international behaviour.

It is indeed regrettable that the Security Council is not taking the necessary steps to compel Eritrea to live up to what is expected of it under Council resolution 1907 (2009). Despite the sanctions, Eritrea is still the principal architect of the complicated situation in Somalia, through its training, arming and nurturing of extremist elements such as Al-Shabaab and Hizb al-Islam, who are causing havoc in that country today.

That reprehensible conduct on the part of the regime has been by no means isolated or confined to our subregion. On the contrary, it has been standard behaviour for the Eritrean regime, extending far beyond the subregion, to other parts of the continent and sometimes even outside it.

Consistent with its innate character, the regime committed acts of aggression against practically all its neighbours in the space of only a few years after its independence. That is unprecedented for any newly independent State, giving Eritrea the dubious distinction of being an international pariah in the family of nations. Therefore, if we are to achieve a breakthrough in Somalia, the time is long overdue for the Security Council to take resolute action and see to it that its decisions are complied with.

Since its founding more than six decades ago, the United Nations, as the principal global player on the international scene with multifarious responsibilities, has, under the circumstances, lived up to the vision set for it in the Charter. There is no gainsaying the fact that if the United Nations did not exist, we would have had to create it. It is an indispensable Organization, particularly for us in the developing world. However, while underscoring its importance, we should not lose sight of the need for its reform, which is an ongoing process. That is how we can ensure the Organization's viability. Ethiopia will always be ready to give whatever support is necessary to that end.

When we talk of the United Nations as a global actor, the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and our continental organization, the African Union, need hardly be emphasized. Of particular significance is the ongoing cooperation and consultation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, in line with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. We should continue that cooperation, and Ethiopia will do whatever is necessary in that regard.

In conclusion, let me reiterate, as a founding Member, Ethiopia's enduring commitment to the ideals of our Organization and the fulfilment of its objectives, as set out in the Charter, which remains a living document and a source of inspiration for the international community.

The President (*spoke in French*). I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Héctor Lacognata, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay.

Mr. Lacognata (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, let me first convey on my own behalf and on behalf of the Republic of Paraguay our wishes for every success in your sensitive and important function at the helm of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. I would also like to express my delegation's recognition of Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, President of the Assembly at the sixty-fourth session, for the significant achievements made.

Paraguayan democracy has completed its transition, begun 21 years ago, with the transfer of

power from one political force to another in recent elections held under international observation. In that way we have consolidated a process of strengthening public freedoms, thereby affirming that those freedoms are fully guaranteed in my country today.

Paraguay comes to this general debate reaffirming its importance and calling for progress in strengthening the United Nations as the body capable of representing the interests of all Member States in the urgent quest for a fairer, more united and equitable world, guaranteed by the full force of international law.

We are very pleased that some great Powers have returned to the path of multilateralism, for some of the problems that afflict mankind can be resolved only with the involvement of every State. It has been demonstrated again that in the search for a better civilization, the solution has not, cannot and will never be found by a handful of nations. Thus the recent financial crisis can be resolved satisfactorily only through measures that are universal and taken with the agreement of the great majority. Once again, it is the General Assembly that will have to make its guiding voice heard on this issue.

We also applaud the Secretary-General's timely decision to hold the High-level Meeting for review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Republic of Paraguay believes that while achievements have been made with regard to the MDGs, we cannot avoid the fact that there are still inequalities all over the world and millions continue to live in abject poverty. The situation has been exacerbated by sudden increases in food prices and the consequences of climate change.

In Paraguay we are betting on the globalization of democracy with social development. We are betting on the universalization of security based on respect for human rights as an unwavering commitment and on dignifying human life. In that spirit we celebrate the recent designation of a Paraguayan citizen as a member of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. We appreciate the support she received, which further strengthens our commitment to ensuring the inclusion of women in all areas of public life.

We would thus like to create a regional community in the context of a global union that in solidarity and together devotes its efforts to eradicating hunger and abject poverty, cooperating effectively to promote the participation of all in building sustainable prosperity through quality education and the provision of a social protection system that excludes no one.

The Republic of Paraguay reiterates its commitment to prioritize the implementation of programmes for economic development with social justice. The national Government is approaching with dedication the development and implementation of social policies to address needs in this area, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable and most needy of our population. That effort at the national level also requires international solidarity, enhanced through the processes of regional and sovereign integration of the people, as well as through a new international financial architecture whose institutions contribute to job creation and to fairer, more equitable trade conditions among the world's nations.

We note with great concern that many citizens of our countries have had to migrate to other parts of the world, particularly Europe and North America, in search of new opportunities for happiness and personal fulfilment. We take this occasion to show our solidarity with the peoples who at this moment are suffering from the consequences of mistaken discriminatory and violent immigration policies, particularly as applied by countries of the so-called first world.

Migration policy is not a domestic issue but rather a question that must respect international human rights norms and standards. Therefore we call on all countries that receive migrants to deal in a spirit of humanitarianism, fraternity and hospitality with all our fellow citizens who today seek to share in the right to work and to a life of dignity far from their respective countries. We propose a deepening of dialogue on the issue in international forums to highlight the human dimension of migration processes and find a just and equitable solution to that reality of globalization.

Full employment and decent work are universal goals, and to reach them requires focusing national efforts and improving international cooperation to address macroeconomic and trade issues involved in the solution to that problem. Bilateral and multilateral institutions for development assistance should insist on employment taking a place of prominence in their policy decisions and implementation.

Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control are not only essential factors to ensure international peace and security, but they also guarantee sustainable

economic and social development for the most vulnerable countries. Only through a sound multilateral system with strict adherence to international law and respect for the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples can we guarantee our mutual security.

In that vein, we condemn coercive economic measures that prevent countries from exercising their sovereign right to choose their own political, economic and social systems. We reject the unilateral application of measures against the Republic of Cuba, and we reiterate our support for the General Assembly resolutions to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade against that nation. The blockade against Cuba undermines the fundamental norms of international law, the principles of sovereign equality among States, non-intervention, non-interference in domestic affairs, freedom of trade and international navigation and the self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in instruments of international law.

We also demand that the Government of the United States adopt necessary measures to put an end to the irregular situation of five Cuban citizens who are currently deprived of their liberty as they sit in United States jails and who have denounced the violation of their human rights.

The Republic of Paraguay reiterates its commitment to international peace and security. In that context we reaffirm our political will to increase our contribution to peacekeeping missions and to continue our efforts to train and equip forces in accordance with the standards of this Organization, so as to progressively increase our participation in those operations.

My country is aware of the serious and complex threats of climate change around the world. We have watched with concern the growing negative effects of irregular climate phenomena that produce drastic consequences that contribute to increased poverty and displacement of persons, among other irreparable effects that must be urgently and uncompromisingly addressed. We subscribe to the Declaration of the Cochabamba summit on climate change and call for an urgent, coordinated and responsible global response to find ways to mitigate, lessen and reverse the tragic, devastating consequences of climate change. Likewise, we proclaim the sovereign rights of peoples over their natural resources, interpreted in the broadest sense.

A new international financial architecture is needed, one that seeks a system of fair trade and efficient regulation mechanisms. We also need new paradigms for integration that attack the root causes of obstacles to integration, such as inequitable exchange rates and the unequal conditions of international relations, the weight of unpayable debt and the imposition of structural changes that undermine the bases of social and political assistance. We are convinced that the United Nations, as a global institution, should play a central role to guarantee the success of our efforts to achieve better international coordination and coherence in the economic and financial spheres.

The issue of landlocked developing countries is fundamental to Paraguay's foreign policy. The asymmetries and disadvantages created by and still being created by that geographical situation can be offset only to the extent that they are internationally recognized and that there be special, individualized treatment for such countries on the part of developed economies on their integration into the globalized world.

It is essential that the United Nations implement the needed reforms with the goal of adapting its structure to the current needs of global society. With that desire for evolution, the Republic of Paraguay supports the process of reform of the Organization so as to strengthen the General Assembly and recover the functions conferred on it by the Charter, as the most representative organ of the Organization.

Paraguay has also been watching with great interest the recent rounds of intergovernmental negotiations about equitable representation on and increasing the membership of the Security Council and other related issues. We advocate full adherence to multilateralism, the sovereign equality of States and inviolable respect for the rule of law. Accordingly, we need a Security Council that is more democratic, and thus its expansion cannot be put off in order to make it more equitable and inclusive.

As a contribution from Paraguay to promoting respect and fraternity — values that strengthen any organization made up of individuals and nations — we have proposed to share with the world our tradition of celebrating friendship. To that end, Paraguay has presented to the United Nations a proposal to proclaim

30 July as World Friendship Day, in order to renew appreciation and recognition among our peoples.

Sixty-five years ago we said, "We the peoples of the United Nations", and Paraguay was among them. Hence we reaffirm each and every precept enshrined in the remarkable Preamble to our Charter. We will be at the side of all, because we believe in the equality of nations large and small, which will allow us progressively to improve the conditions under which justice can be maintained and thereby better the standards of life in larger freedom. That is our mandate. We are committed to fulfil it.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Mr. Piromya (Thailand): Please allow me, Sir, to extend to you, on behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Thailand, our wholehearted congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. You can rest assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

We live in a world of divides. Although the predominantly ideological divide of the Cold War has ended, new divides have come to the fore — politico-security, socio-economic, digital or even based on beliefs. Such divides present challenges to peace, security, prosperity and human dignity. Overcoming them requires that nations work together as one; overcoming them requires a United Nations.

But the effectiveness of such international cooperation depends upon the strength and willingness of individual nations themselves. Thailand is such a nation, willing and ready to cooperate with international partners to help bridge such divides and help the world cross into a better future.

Of course, we are under no illusions about Thailand's own difficulties and our own current divides. But history has shown that Thailand is a resilient country, and its people are capable of overcoming whatever challenges are thrown before them. Thailand remains a functioning democracy, but we are a relatively young one. Like many other democracies, ours will develop and mature with time. The Thai Government is committed to that and to the principles of democracy, the practice of good governance and respect for human rights.

Have no doubt that our Government is resolutely working to heal the political and social divisions in my country. We are working to address any legitimate socio-economic grievances, with a view to bringing back national unity and confidence. We have launched a national reconciliation plan and set up independent committees, led by eminent persons with the utmost integrity, to propose ways to reform the country and its democratic institutions. We will bridge our country's divide.

Human rights remain the cornerstone of the Government's policy. We are looking into any wrongdoings in the past and will ensure that they do not recur and that justice is done. To that end, we have set up an independent fact-finding commission to look into the tragic events earlier this year. Other independent organs, such as our human rights commission, also play a key and active role in safeguarding human rights.

The Thai Government well recognizes that some political grievances mainly arise from the economic disparities in our society. That is a serious issue, and the Government is working to bridge economic and social gaps. We are creating social safety nets through our universal health-care schemes and by providing 15 years of free education, training programmes for the unemployed and support for low-income earners, farmers, the elderly and people with disabilities. Our stimulus packages will benefit not only the overall economy but especially those who are economically and socially disadvantaged and disenfranchised.

Despite our troubles, the Thai economy remains robust, as it and our exports continue to grow steadily. However, we are not complacent, as much remains to be done. We need to better spread economic and social well-being and vitality throughout Thailand, which will also contribute to the reconciliation, trust and stability of the country. To that end, we seek to strengthen Thailand's creative economy by utilizing our rich cultural and historical heritage and the creativity of both urban and rural Thais to add more value to Thai products and services, so that our productivity and competitiveness are enhanced and our wealth more widely spread.

I think we have proven to the world the strength of our national character and the resilience of our nation. Despite the tragic incidents, Thailand has continued to move forward, not merely for the benefit

of the country but also for that of the international community. It is evident that we remain an active and responsible Member of the United Nations, ready to enhance our present partnerships and build new ones to help create a better future for the world.

I will now expand upon how Thailand has contributed, and can further contribute, internationally to help bridge the world's divides.

Many a conflict, whether inter- or intra-State, stems from development disparities and the suffering caused by economic injustice. The world is divided, not simply into have and have-not countries but, rather, into have-more and have-less ones, and into North and South. Thailand therefore believes that in bridging the development gap, global economic growth should be balanced and inclusive, regional economic cooperation and integration should be enhanced and the disadvantaged and dispossessed should not be left behind.

The recent global financial crisis served as a valuable wake-up call for all, reminding us to live within our means. Thailand believes that people-centred development, moderation in economic behaviour and the optimal use of limited resources — as stipulated in His Majesty the King of Thailand's "sufficiency economy" philosophy — are essential if we are to have sustainable economic development and growth. Thailand has embarked upon that path, and we urge others to follow.

The financial crisis has also alerted us to the necessity of better global governance and the need for reform of international financial institutions, with due consideration for the interests of developing nations, as they are the ones affected the most. Countries must work more closely together to better coordinate fiscal and monetary policies and to improve the regulation of financial institutions.

On our part, Thailand has engaged actively in regional and international forums such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN+3 process, the Group of 20 (G-20) and the United Nations. As ASEAN Chair, Thailand was invited to the G-20 Summits in London and Pittsburgh last year to share ASEAN's experiences and lessons learned from the 1997 financial crisis.

Thailand believes that regional initiatives like the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization, the Asian Bond Markets Initiative and the ASEAN Economic Community would all help to complement ongoing global cooperation to achieve balanced and sustainable growth, as well as to promote a resilient international financial system that also addresses the concerns of developing countries. We believe that ASEAN, through the ASEAN Chair, will continue to contribute to the forum its relevant experiences in achieving those goals.

As a developing country itself, Thailand stands ready to help others in need. We believe in greater South-South cooperation, for it is fellow developing countries that best understand what is required to help push development forward. We are also active in building partnerships between the developed and developing world, providing a bridge between them through triangular cooperation by adapting technology from developed countries to match the needs of developing ones. We have achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals, and we stand ready to share our knowledge and experience, especially in alleviating poverty and improving well-being in other countries.

We have already done so in our region by cooperating with our neighbours to improve social welfare and build essential infrastructure. Through the Thailand-initiated Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, the initiative for an ASEAN Integration Strategic Framework, the East-West Economic Corridor, the Greater Mekong subregion projects and bilateral cooperation, we have striven to promote greater technical cooperation in the region and to create and upgrade transport and telecommunication networks to facilitate greater economic activity. Such initiatives ultimately help narrow the developmental divide within the region.

Of the problems of development, food security ranks as one of the most important. For people to live, mouths must be fed. As a major food exporter, Thailand can contribute to ensuring greater food security. We also believe in greater regional cooperation. The ASEAN Plus Three emergency rice reserve stands as a model for other regions to emulate.

Climate change is undeniable. It is happening now. We are all experiencing its effects, which have exacerbated the world's woes, including food scarcity and natural disasters. Thailand is a developing country actively pursuing voluntary climate-change mitigation efforts. We plan to increase our forest area through

reforestation and afforestation, as well as our renewable energy usage. Indeed, our eleventh national social and economic development plan, for the years 2012 to 2016, now being drafted, aims to move Thailand towards becoming a low-carbon society.

We are also aiming for green economic growth, with energy used more efficiently and wisely. But the developed world must also play its part in helping others become better equipped to fight climate change. Greater technology transfer is thus a must. We sincerely hope that the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Cancún, will lead to more concrete and comprehensive results in our fight against climate change.

Development is linked to human security, which is linked to human rights. People must have freedom from want as well as from fear. But while fundamental human rights are universal, how they are guaranteed and promoted differs from country to country in accordance with different belief systems and cultures. Thailand believes that we should bridge such differences by working together towards a more common understanding of human rights and how they must be protected. To this end, forums such as the interfaith dialogues and the Alliance of Civilizations are invaluable contributions to greater common understanding.

I stress again that human rights are a core principle of the Government of Thailand and its foreign policy. Thailand's election to the Human Rights Council for the years 2010 to 2013, and its election by acclamation to the presidency of the Council in June, is clear testament to the faith of the international community in Thailand's active and positive role in promoting and protecting human rights. As a member of the Human Rights Council, Thailand aims to reinvigorate the Council to address more effectively human rights problems worldwide. To this end, as President of the Council, we hope to see the review process through to completion by next year. We believe the Council should adopt a more even-handed approach through greater cooperation and engagement with the concerned countries themselves, to establish greater dialogue between States as well as regions and to try to forge consensus among them.

Instead of offering mere criticism and the imposition of values seen as foreign, we must reach out to persuade the countries concerned to understand that human rights are shared values and common to all. Only through true engagement can the Council have a real impact on the betterment of people's lives and ultimately help pave the way towards peace. Only then can we ensure that the rights of man do not again fall hostage to the wrongs of humankind.

Thailand has striven for this regionally as well. Under Thailand's chairmanship of ASEAN from July 2008 to the end of 2009, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights was created to protect and promote human rights and to uphold human dignity. We have also contributed to setting international human rights norms in the area of improving the lives of female inmates, through Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol's, the draft United Nations rules for the treatment of women prisoners and non-custodial measures for women offenders, which have been submitted for the Assembly's consideration (see A/C.3/65/L.5).

Thailand has also rendered humanitarian assistance to preserve human well-being and dignity injured by natural disasters, not only in nearby places such as Myanmar, China and Pakistan, but also as far afield as Haiti and, most recently, Chad. We remain ready to offer our facilities as a staging centre for humanitarian assistance in our region.

The flames of war can be sparked for many reasons, but none are as combustible as the security divides and power imbalances, real or perceived, that exist between nations as well as within them. Thailand believes that global disarmament and non-proliferation are essential in order to level the security playing field, to dispel that sense of an imbalance of power and security. The United Nations must continue its active role to that end, but major Powers and regional entities must also do their fair share: the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty is a good case in point.

Thailand supports international efforts towards the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We have consistently abided by the relevant Security Council resolutions and are gravely concerned about the threat of the spread of such weapons to terrorists. That is why Thailand has recently joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

The maintenance of international peace and security is a serious and costly endeavour, and history has shown that the international community has often acted too late, enforcing and keeping the peace rather than making it. We believe that more should be invested in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy, which are much less expensive than peace enforcement and peacekeeping. It is much better to hold talks than to wage war. It is also far less likely for a community of nations to wage war within itself. That is why ASEAN is steadfastly becoming a community: economically, socially, culturally and politically.

But in cases where peacekeeping has been and is necessary, Thailand has also done its part. In the past two decades, we have contributed nearly 20,000 troops, police officers and civilian staff to United Nations peacekeeping operations worldwide: from Cambodia and Timor-Leste to Haiti and very soon Darfur in the Sudan. Thailand has also recently sent a counter-piracy task force to assist international efforts in patrolling and protecting ships from pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden area. These are our contributions to the maintenance of peace and security worldwide, and we are prepared to do more. Rest assured that as long as there is peace to be kept, the Thais will be ready to help keep it.

However, peacekeeping alone is not enough. The conditions for sustainable peace must be built in post-conflict societies to ensure that blood is not shed again. We believe that sustainable development is crucial to perpetual peace. This is what Thailand is working for, by helping lay the foundations for peace through development during the peacekeeping phase — from the transfer of agricultural know-how in Timor-Leste to the building of essential infrastructure in Burundi. We have also striven for this goal through our membership of the Peacebuilding Commission. Thailand envisages that body playing a greater role in ensuring sustainable peace worldwide.

Thailand itself is poised to play a greater role in ensuring international peace and security. We have presented our candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2017-2018, for which we ask members' invaluable support. Thailand aspires to work closely with our international partners to ensure that the path towards war is never trodden again, but is rerouted towards peace.

While we believe that the Security Council has so far played an indispensable role in maintaining international peace and security, we also believe that the Council should be adjusted to better reflect world realities in order to tackle today's global challenges more effectively. Thailand envisions a Security Council working with greater efficiency, transparency and engagement with concerned parties, be they countries, regional organizations or other United Nations bodies. We believe that, through such reforms, the Council would become more effective in maintaining peace and security worldwide.

Thailand is wholly committed to the United Nations and its lofty ideals. Since the birth of the Organization over six decades ago, Thailand has worked closely with the United Nations to advance peace and security, development and human rights around the world. And we will continue to do so. In spite of our problems, our commitment and determination have never wavered.

As a medium-sized and middle-income developing country, Thailand is ready to engage with — and serve as a connection between — North and South, East and West. As a country with substantial experience in addressing today's problems, we are ready to help narrow the international gaps in development, human rights and security. Thailand believes that the time to act is now, and we stand ready with our partners to act as a bridge between worlds and to help bridge the world's divides.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Secretary for Relations with States of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Archbishop Mamberti (Holy See) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Holy See, I am pleased to warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, and to offer our best wishes for the successful fulfilment of your mandate. In this new period of work for the General Assembly, the Holy See wishes to offer its genuine collaboration in tackling the numerous challenges faced by the international community. The 65 years of existence of the United Nations are a unique event in history in and of themselves, particularly when contrasted with the annihilation of hopes placed in the peace conferences

of the beginning of the twentieth century, and later in the League of Nations.

The existence of the United Nations shows that humankind has found in the Organization a response to the terrifying tragedies of the two World Wars. Despite the imperfection of its structures and its way of functioning, the United Nations has sought to bring solutions to international problems in the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian fields, and has tried to fulfil the mandate given to it by its Charter, namely to be a centre for the coordination of the action of States with a view to the maintenance of peace and friendly relations among peoples.

The dialogue among the representatives of States that is renewed every year in the plenary of the General Assembly, which remains open and lively in the other bodies and agencies of the United Nations family, has been the basic tool for fulfilling this mandate. There have been times when this dialogue has been, more than anything else, a clash of opposing and irreconcilable ideologies and positions. However, the United Nations has become irreplaceable in the life of the people of the world in the search for a better future for all the inhabitants of the planet.

It is from the perspective of this productive international dialogue carried out through the discussions and deliberations that take place in this Hall that I would like to recall important developments related to international peace and security that took place during the sixty-fourth session of the Assembly.

First of all, the Holy See welcomes the entry into force on 1 August of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This instrument, which the Holy See was among the first States to ratify, does represent an important result for multilateralism, based on constructive cooperation among Governments and civil society, as well as the connection between humanitarian law and human rights.

Another important result was the positive conclusion last May of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with the publication of a consensus-based document that provides for different actions related to the three main pillars of the treaty: nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Among these, an important sign of hope was a decision to convene, before 2012, a conference to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Furthermore, also in the area of peace and disarmament, the first meeting, last July, in New York, of the Preparatory Committee for a Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which is set for 2012 is also worth mentioning. This meeting showed that the process, which has begun for the treaty, is shared by all States that are aware of the need to legally settle the issue of the arms trade for reasons of peace, humanitarian protection and social and economic development.

In the context and spirit of successful international dialogue, we should also welcome the signing of the New START treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation. That signing is a step forward in relations among the nuclear Powers, and the Holy See hopes that it will open new prospects and lead to substantial arms reductions in the future. Similarly, during this session of the General Assembly, a High-level Meeting was held, some days ago, on revitalizing disarmament negotiations, which was very useful for discussing ways to give new life to the Conference on Disarmament and to continue to build a consensus on the major obstacles to agreement on disarmament, in particular, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. We must do everything possible to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons, and the Holy See supports all efforts along these lines.

During the previous session of the General Assembly, the United Nations made an unprecedented contribution to international cooperation and peace in Haiti, where, during the earthquake of 12 January 2010, the head of the United Nations Mission, Ambassador Hédi Annabi, died, as did his assistant, Mr. Luiz Carlos da Costa, along with 82 other civil servants and members of the peacekeeping forces. On behalf of the Holy See, I would like to extend our sincere condolences to the Secretary-General and the national authorities of the States of the persons who died, as well as their families and colleagues. Their sacrifice should serve as an impetus for a new global commitment to maintaining peace.

The Holy See has always recognized and appreciated actions carried out by United Nations peacekeeping forces. The important increase in requests for intervention in recent years shows the increased confidence in United Nations activities in

cooperation with regional organizations, but it also highlights the importance of the growing role played by the United Nations and regional organizations in preventive diplomacy.

Likewise, the action of the Peacebuilding Commission remains fundamental to rebuilding the social, legal and economic fabric that was destroyed by war and to avoiding the relapse into conflict. Initiatives to prevent conflicts, to peacefully resolve conflicts, to separate warring parties and to promote reconstruction deserve generous political and economic support from all States Members of the United Nations. Support from all would be an eloquent show of confidence in a destiny based on solidarity for humankind.

If we think that normative developments with regard to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons have shown signs of progress, there are reasons for concern with respect to the many obstacles to global security and peace. Above all, military spending in the world continues to be excessive and even to increase. The problem of the exercise of the legitimate right of States to the peaceful development of nuclear energy in accordance with effective international monitoring of non-proliferation remains relevant. The Holy See encourages all parties involved in settling various ongoing controversies, in particular those with respect to the Korean peninsula and the Persian Gulf region, as well as adjoining regions, to carry out an honest in-depth dialogue that would be able to harmoniously reconcile all rights of the nations concerned.

The recent terrible natural catastrophes in Pakistan add to the difficulties caused by conflicts that have beset that region. In addition to the humanitarian response, which must be generous, and other associated measures, there must also be a broader effort at mutual and deeper understanding of the causes of the hostilities.

Moreover, genuine dialogue, trust and generosity in putting aside peripheral or short-term interests are the way to achieve a lasting solution to the conflict between the State of Israel and the Palestinians. Dialogue and understanding among the various parties involved is also the only way to achieve reconciliation in Iraq and Myanmar, for example, as well as to resolve ethnic and cultural problems in Central Asia and the regions of the Caucasus and to calm recurring tensions in Africa, such as in the Sudan, just before decisive elections.

There is a significant economic component to most of those conflicts. Substantially improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people and other peoples living under civil or regional wars will no doubt make a crucial contribution to transforming violent opposition into patient and peaceful dialogue.

The High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) took place here several days ago. All Member States once again solemnly committed themselves to make every necessary effort to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The Holy See welcomes the reiterated will to uproot poverty, which it hopes will resolutely be brought to an end. However, it is important to underscore that we will not achieve the Goals without fulfilling two great moral imperatives.

On the one hand, it is essential that rich and emerging countries fully honour their development assistance commitments and immediately establish and operationalize a financial and trading framework that on the whole favours the weakest countries. On the other hand, rich and poor alike should ensure an ethical political and economic change that guarantees good governance and eradicates all forms of corruption. Otherwise, we risk reaching the year 2015 not having achieved sufficient results, except — and this would be sad and paradoxical — in the areas of population control and promoting minority lifestyles, as introduced in certain paragraphs of the recently held summit. In that case, the Millennium Goals would become a veritable fraud vis-à-vis the comprehensive human development of peoples.

With regard to the environment, which is the subject of Millennium Goal 7, the participation of more than 115 heads of State and Government at the Conference of the States Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Copenhagen in December 2009 demonstrated the attention and importance attached to an issue as complex as the climate on the international agenda. The Holy See hopes that the next session of the Conference of the States Parties will take a political decision that will make the negotiations on a legally binding agreement more concrete.

At the heart of that debate is the establishment of a development model based on a new energy system.

Nevertheless, it is important to recall the ethical issues associated with this matter. It is not just about achieving a world less dependent on fossil fuels and more devoted to energy efficiency and alternative fuels, but about changing unbridled and irresponsible consumption behaviour. As my delegation has often observed with regard to the Millennium Goals, it is that behaviour, and not population growth and improving living conditions in less developed countries, that places a growing and unsustainable burden on resources and on the environment.

The positive results achieved by the international community in the course of the Assembly's previous session would not have been possible without dialogue among Governments, which are being joined with growing determination and effectiveness by civil society interlocutors. However, to be honest and effective, that dialogue must be genuinely dia-logos — an exchange of wisdom and wisdom shared. The dialogue must move quickly from an exchange of words and a search for balance among opposing interests towards a genuine sharing of wisdom for the common good.

It is precisely for that reason that Article 1 of the Charter links the promotion of human rights with the defence of peace, settlement of disputes and resolving international problems of an economic nature. Nations are not separate entities, independent of the peoples who comprise them. The fundamental national interest of all Governments should be the establishment and maintenance of the necessary conditions for the full development of the material and spiritual good of every inhabitant of their countries. The promotion of and respect for human rights are therefore the ultimate goal of dialogue and international affairs, as well as the indispensable conditions for genuine and fruitful dialogue among countries.

The Holy See is also attentively following the work of the Assembly's Third Committee and of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. This statement in the general debate is also an opportunity for me to express our support for the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and all specialized agencies and bodies working in the broad field of human and humanitarian rights. In that regard, the Holy See also believes that, although slow, the progress made in the discussions on the principle of the responsibility to protect is cause for hope. Nevertheless, resolute and effective attention is still lacking with regard to the problems of refugees, people who have been forcibly expelled and large-scale displacements.

The history of the development of human rights itself illustrates that respect for religious freedom is the cornerstone of the entire human rights architecture. When that freedom is lacking, absent too will be the recognition of the transcendent nature of every human person, which entails a dignity that existed before, and is superior to, the political and normative awareness and that creates an irrepressible framework of freedom and responsibility. If religious freedom falters, all human rights are at risk of becoming something that government grants — or, at best, the result of a balance of social forces, which are variable by nature, because they will have no foundation other than balance or agreement itself.

Beyond criticism of the organizational limitations and lack of effectiveness of the United Nations, we see that there is a universally shared awareness of the need for the Organization, as well as a universal feeling of gratitude for its efforts. All of us understand that, by virtue of its numerous bodies, the Organization constitutes an essential forum for dialogue and understanding between nations. The best way of guaranteeing that the United Nations continues to carry out its historic mission of coordinating and keeping all States united around the common goals of peace, security and comprehensive human development for all will be to continuously focus on the dignity of all men and women and effectively respect it, beginning with the right to life — even of the weakest, such as unborn children and the terminally ill — and religious freedom.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bakary Fofana, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, African Integration and la Francophonie of the Republic of Guinea

Mr. Fofana (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak before the General Assembly to convey the warm greetings of the people and Government of Guinea, and most especially that of His Excellency General Sékouba Konaté, interim President of the Republic, President of the Transition. On this happy occasion, I would first of all like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I wish you every success and assure you in advance of my

delegation's support. Your undeniable personal qualities, in conjunction with proven ability, will certainly inspire our work at a time when our Organization faces numerous challenges involving the entire international community. I would also like to extend our gratitude to your predecessor, Mr. Abdussalam Treki, for the skill and dedication that he showed in carrying out his mandate.

Here, we would like to express our gratitude to our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his tireless efforts to promote the noble ideals of the United Nations and, in particular, for his personal involvement in settling the crisis in my country.

On assuming power on 23 December 2008 against a background of political and economic crisis, the new Guinean authorities had to deal with many difficulties, in particular poor governance, State crimes, widespread insecurity and the proliferation and circulation of small arms and light weapons. That worrying situation led to the adoption of various measures to restore order and security, build national unity and establish a regime respectful of human rights and individual and public freedoms.

In that specific context, the agreement signed in Ouagadougou on 15 January 2010 enabled the people of Guinea, of all inclinations, to embark on a path of peace and dialogue and implement a political plan ensuring the return to constitutional order based on the rule of law and good governance. Despite pitfalls, that process of democratization led to the establishment of transitional bodies, specifically, a Government of national unity, led by a Prime Minister, a head of Government coming from the Forces vives, the National Transitional Council and the Independent National Electoral Commission, as well as a timetable setting the deadline for organizing free and transparent elections.

In a show of great commitment, following the adoption of the new Constitution, the people turned out in force on 27 June 2010 for the most free and democratic presidential election that the country had known since its independence in 1958. The second round of that important election is planned for the coming weeks.

Here, from this rostrum, I would like to launch an urgent appeal to the African and international communities to continue to support Guinea with a view to strengthening peace, stability and security in the subregion. I would also like to pay warm tribute to the Facilitator, His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaore, President of Burkina Faso, for his tireless efforts to promote the democratic process in Guinea. I also extend that tribute to the International Contact Group on Guinea and, through it, the member States of the Economic Community of West African States and of the African Union, the international community and all friendly countries that are working with us at this critical time.

Peace and security continue to be threatened in some parts of the African continent and the world. Somalia continues to be subject to a fratricidal and painful war. In the Sudan, peace remains fragile despite the huge sacrifices and the investments granted. We urge the African Union and the international community to continue their efforts for a prompt and lasting settlement of those conflicts.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the recent political developments have made it possible for that friendly neighbouring country to move towards the presidential election planned for 31 October. That important step forward, in conjunction with the positive outcomes of the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone and Liberia, give us real cause for encouragement and hope for the peoples of the Mano River Union.

With regard to Western Sahara, my Government supports the efforts of the United Nations and remains firmly committed to the Moroccan initiative on the negotiation of a status of autonomy for the Sahara region. It urges the stakeholders to find a lasting and mutually beneficial political solution.

The upsurge in threats and terrorist violence in Africa are a source of serious concern to Guinea. My country supports the prompt establishment of a consultative framework for action to eradicate that scourge.

In the Middle East, my delegation welcomes the direct talks between the Palestinian authorities and the Israeli Government under the auspices of the United States of America. It hopes that those talks will lead to the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with Israel. The Guinean Government believes that peace in that region can be achieved only in a climate of mutual trust and with a will to implement the agreements and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. From that viewpoint, Israel must

withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories and end its settlement policy.

Only a week ago, in this Hall, the international community reiterated its commitment to the billions of people who are expecting it to make a reality of the promise of a better world expressed in the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2). Guinea welcomes the holding of that summit, which allowed our heads of State and Government and our partners to reaffirm their will to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) within the agreed time frame.

My country remains convinced that achieving the Millennium Development Goals is within reach. That is borne out by the remarkable progress made in many areas by countries that are among the poorest on the planet. Barely five years from the 2015 deadline, we must step up the pace, particularly in the countries facing major challenges, in order to consolidate the achievements and make even more effective progress than we have to date.

In order to take up the many challenges of the twenty-first century, development partners and the international community have no choice but to step up efforts to work together to lend new impetus to international cooperation. My country urges all stakeholders to assume, at the national, regional and international levels, their share of responsibility in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Republic of Guinea welcomes the progress made in recent years with regard to official development assistance. However, it regrets that long-standing commitments and those entered into more recently are far from being met. It is vital to reflect on all standard and supplementary sources of financing for development. Innovative financing is becoming an increasingly important means to mobilize additional, predictable and stable resources to supplement official development assistance.

Guinea, which attaches great importance to an increase in official development assistance, reiterates its proposal on organizing an African conference on innovative financing and drawing up a draft African declaration on transparency of financial governance and fighting illegal capital flows. The purpose of that conference would be to promote strategies to mobilize innovative financing as a complement to traditional aid and the domestic resources needed to fund the MDGs. The draft African declaration on transparency of financial governance and fighting illegal capital flows would seek to stem the immense capital outflows from Africa by redirecting them towards development of the continent.

Those proposals were warmly welcomed by various African bodies and the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development. They also received support at the twenty-fifth summit of heads of State and Government of Africa and France and the backing of the African Union at its fifteenth summit in Kampala. My delegation hopes that those initiatives will feature among the proposals for action on Africa during this sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Regarding international trade, we hope for a prompt conclusion of the Doha Round negotiations on the basis of an agreement that is both far-reaching and fair to all stakeholders, in particular the least developed countries. We again call for developed countries to respect their commitment to remove by 2013 all export subsidies that significantly distort trade and agricultural production in developing countries. My country welcomes the substantial progress made with respect to debt relief and urges the international community to continue its endeavours to effectively implement the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

The subject of climate change quite rightly occupies a central place on the international agenda, given that phenomenon's devastating effects. That reveals the emergence of a collective awareness and the real threat that that phenomenon poses to humankind.

Given that urgency, my country calls for concerted and courageous international efforts to alleviate the suffering of victims, particularly the vulnerable populations of poor countries. The commitments undertaken with regard to developing countries in terms of financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building must be fulfilled, so that the appropriate measures can be undertaken to adapt to climate change and to mitigate its effects in those countries. In that connection, my delegation hopes that the climate conference to be held at the end of the year in Cancún, Mexico, will lead to an ambitious agreement that will commit States to concrete action.

As it is fully aware of the pressing need to act, the Guinean Government, for its part, is determined to assume its share of the responsibility, especially since

Guinea plays a leading role in implementing all policies and strategies aimed at achieving sustainable development and restoring ecological balance in western African. As the source of over 20 rivers that irrigate the West African region, including the Niger, Senegal, Gambia and Makona Rivers, Guinea is a veritable water tower for Western Africa and the crucible for an incredibly rich biodiversity.

The main theme of this session, "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance", is extremely timely. We acknowledge that most gratefully. In a highly interdependent world that is marked by the combined effects of many crises, a new culture of international solidarity is essential.

Likewise, a profound reform of our Organization is needed to make it more democratic, more representative and transparent. Sixty-five years after its creation, the United Nations does indeed need to be reformed in order to become more effective and better placed to meet the aspirations of our peoples. Let us make it an effective instrument in the service of peace, security, development and human rights. Only in that way will current and future generations in all countries and all regions of the world see their hopes of living in peace realized in a world that is free and prosperous, without fear, poverty or need.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Daw Penjo, Foreign Secretary of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Mr. Penjo (Bhutan): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. We are confident that with your vast academic and political experience, you will provide the Assembly with the necessary leadership in the year ahead. Allow me to also commend your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, for his many initiatives and guidance in steering the sixty-fourth session to a successful conclusion.

My delegation welcomes your proposal on "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance" as the theme for the general debate of this session. That theme is most appropriate, as it comes at a time when the world looks to the United Nations for its stewardship in addressing the multiple global crises, the devastating effects of climate change and the issue of the maintenance of global peace and security. The United Nations has long been recognized as an indispensable global Organization due to its mandate, and must continuously adapt itself to deal with the challenges confronting the world so that its pivotal role in global governance is maintained. No other multilateral organization or intergovernmental grouping, without the legitimacy of universal membership, can hope to replace the centrality of the United Nations in global affairs.

The vast majority of Members of the United Nations are small States. The principle of sovereign equality enshrined in the United Nations Charter establishes that all States, regardless of size, wealth, relative power, population or level of development, are accorded equal opportunity to participate and contribute to the work of the United Nations, its principal organs and its high-level posts. That, in fact, is the bedrock upon which this House was founded 64 years ago. It is a principle that must remain in the forefront and help chart our course further as our dialogue on United Nations reform continues.

How can we, as Members of the United Nations, credibly espouse equity among nations and peoples if we fail to practise it among ourselves? After 39 years of membership, Bhutan continues to believe that the United Nations still has room and a role for smaller States, as equal partners in global affairs, including in the maintenance of international peace and security. For that reason, Bhutan is seeking membership in the Security Council in a non-permanent seat for the term 2013 and 2014.

Last week at the High-level Plenary Meeting, our heads of State and Government acknowledged the plight of millions of people living in poverty and agreed to recommit themselves to keeping their pledge on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The successful achievement of the MDGs by all Member States will serve as a measure of the effectiveness of the United Nations. The United Nations must therefore continue to provide the necessary leadership to foster renewed global partnership to enable the realization of all the MDGs by 2015.

On 20 September, Bhutan's Prime Minister highlighted to this gathering the need to move beyond conventional development practices (see A/65/PV.3). He therefore proposed the inclusion of happiness as the ninth Millennium Development Goal. My delegation is hopeful that that proposal of my Prime Minister will receive the support of the United Nations membership.

My delegation is pleased to note that the reform agenda initiated following the World Summit in 2005 is beginning to yield results. In that regard, we welcome the Assembly's unanimous adoption of the resolution on system-wide coherence (resolution 64/289) early in July 2010, which, inter alia, established UN Women. The creation of UN Women effectively consolidates all the existing mandates and functions relating to women and constitutes an important step in fulfilling the commitments undertaken in the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing. We are confident that that entity will address the global issues of gender equality and women's empowerment with great vigour.

Bhutan has long been convinced that no society can be a happy one if it is not inclusive. Promoting the conditions that will enable the pursuit of national happiness by all our citizens, so that, regardless of race, sex, language, religion, politics or other status, they may enjoy a good quality of life in a progressive and prosperous country is not only one of the objectives of government, it is our moral obligation. This spirit is further reaffirmed by our Constitution, which guarantees the fundamental rights of all Bhutanese, thus demonstrating that Bhutan is committed to building an inclusive society, one that enables all Bhutanese, including those with disabilities, to lead fulfilling lives, to contribute and to participate as full members of society. My Government was therefore particularly pleased to sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 21 September 2010.

We are also pleased to note that resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence will contribute to the enhancement of the operational activities of the United Nations, making the funding system more systematic and harmonizing the overall governance structure. This would improve the capacity of the United Nations to more effectively deliver assistance to countries, thus strengthening its development pillar.

My delegation recognizes the important role of the General Assembly in setting the global agenda and dealing with many of the important issues confronting the international community today. With each passing year, the responsibilities entrusted to the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative and policy-making body of the United Nations, continue to grow, and we believe that the authority of the General Assembly must be simultaneously enhanced to assume the growing mandate entrusted to it. We therefore appreciate the progress made by the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, where a number of key issues have been highlighted, especially the strengthening of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. We are confident that, with the political determination of Member States, those deliberations will result in a stronger United Nations.

We are encouraged that, in the past year, the five rounds of intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation in and larger membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council, held under the chairmanship of Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan, is making good progress. My delegation supports the expansion of both the permanent and the non-permanent membership of the Security Council to reflect the contemporary realities and make it a more representative body. We believe that India, Japan, Germany and Brazil plus two countries from the African continent, which have the capacity and resources to shoulder the onerous responsibilities with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security, should be granted permanent membership.

Given the renewed commitment of the international community to the MDGs with a view to improving the lives of the people in the poorest countries, it is most timely that the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries should take place in 2011 in Turkey. We thank the Government of Turkey for its generous offer and assistance in hosting this important Conference. We also appreciate the efforts of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in coordinating preparations for the Conference.

As we undertake preparations for this event, we will look to you, Mr. President, for your support and direction, so that the least developed countries (LDCs) together with all our development partners cannot only ensure a successful outcome, but also, more importantly, give their people a chance for a better life. We are confident that the Conference will build on the successes of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 and adopt new measures and strategies for the development of the LDCs in the next decade.

As most fittingly described, the other defining challenge of our time, namely, climate change, requires the collective and coordinated effort of all nations, as its devastating effects know no bounds. My country has full faith in the leadership of the United Nations and believes in the centrality of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in addressing climate change. We are confident that the ongoing negotiations will lead to a concrete, comprehensive and equitable agreement at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Cancún later this year, as envisaged under the Bali Action Plan. Success will be essential in Cancún for small and vulnerable countries such as my own, which bears a heavier burden as the result of climate change. We must have the necessary resources for mitigation and adaptation.

With the severe threats and damaging effects caused by climate change in South Asia, as recently occurred in Pakistan, it was no coincidence that the sixteenth Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which Bhutan was honoured to host in April this year, appropriately chose climate change as its theme. In addition to adopting the Thimphu Silver Jubilee Declaration, entitled "Towards a Green and Happy South Asia", the Summit also adopted the Thimphu Statement on Climate Change. The Statement outlines important initiatives to further strengthen and intensify regional cooperation to address the adverse impacts of climate change in South Asia. One of the important outcomes of the Thimphu Summit is the formulation of a common SAARC statement on climate change, which Bhutan, as the current SAARC Chair, will present at the forthcoming Conference of the Parties in December in Cancún.

We are pleased to report that, as Bhutan progresses into its third year as a democratic constitutional monarchy, the foundations for a sustainable and vibrant democracy are growing stronger. The institutional arrangements for the three branches of Government, as required under our Constitution, are now complete and functioning with the establishment of the Supreme Court earlier this year. Likewise, all the constitutional bodies with oversight functions have been firmly established, and the media is performing its role as the fourth estate in an atmosphere of freedom.

There is no doubt that, given the challenges confronting our increasingly interdependent world, the role of the United Nations is vital in addressing those issues. In order to do so, the United Nations requires the full support and commitment of the entire membership. Only then will it be able to truly reaffirm its central role in global governance. I therefore conclude by assuring you, Mr. President, of my delegation's full support and cooperation, as you embark on a year-long journey of further strengthening this Organization.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Pak Kil Yon, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Pak Kil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Korean: interpretation provided by the delegation*): Mr. President, on behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I would like, first of all, to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. In the same vein, I believe that your able leadership will bring success to this session.

This year marks the sixty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The founding of the United Nations laid down an international legal basis for preventing the recurrence of catastrophes, such as the two World Wars that inflicted immeasurable sufferings on humankind, for safeguarding world peace and security and for achieving socio-economic progress. The most important meaning of the founding of the United Nations is the establishment of the principle of sovereign equality in international relations, which has enabled all States on this planet, large and small, to join their efforts for peace and development.

The history of the United Nations, spanning 65 years, is the history of continued challenges to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The logic and politics of power, which seek to negate sovereign equality, still remain in sight in international relations, even today after the turn of the century. International law and order are trampled on by the arbitrariness and high-handedness of individual Powers. Military invasions of sovereign States, arms build-ups and threats of use of force continue

unchecked and, what is more, a series of pretexts are used to justify them.

Despicable trickery and attempts to overthrow other countries' socio-political systems have become ever more rampant. The banner of human rights protection and the institutional mechanism of the United Nations General Assembly are abused to that end. To deny the right of other countries to choose their own systems constitutes in itself a violation of the human rights of their people. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is one of those victimized countries.

That reality requires a strengthening of the role of the United Nations, in conformity with the changed times and situation, which, in our view, is possible only after a more dynamic and appropriate reform of the United Nations. The composition and the rules of procedure of the Security Council should be restructured and revised in such a way that the representation and will of the entire United Nations membership are correctly reflected, in particular, by the full representation of the non-aligned countries and other developing countries. The representation of a new group of United Nations Member States that achieved independence after the founding of the United Nations should also be ensured.

The authority of the General Assembly should be enhanced decisively. The General Assembly, which is the most democratic organ in the United Nations, has less power than the undemocratic Security Council. That abnormal situation should no longer be allowed to continue. In addressing key issues such as peace and development, the broad and active participation of the developing countries and their interests should be duly promoted.

The Korean peninsula, like the Middle East, has long been a chronic hot spot seriously affecting world peace and security. The United Nations has included the Korean issue as a major item on its agenda for over 30 years. This led to the adoption of resolution 3390 (XXX) in 1975, calling for the dissolution of the United Nations Command in South Korea, the withdrawal of all foreign forces there and the replacement of the Armistice Agreement with a peace agreement, as a measure to reduce tension and maintain lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

Another 35 years have elapsed since then. The Korean peninsula is nevertheless still in a state of armistice, which means that there is neither war nor peace. While the aforesaid resolution is yet to be implemented, the sovereignty and the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea towards peaceful development are constantly threatened and undermined, as explosive situations leading to the brink of war are created periodically on the Korean peninsula. The most recent example is the farcical huge sabre-rattling arms build-up and threat of use of force waged on a massive scale by the United States and South Korean authorities on the Korean peninsula and its surroundings by taking advantage of the *Cheonan* incident.

The touch-and-go situation created some time ago in North-East Asia, including the Korean peninsula, proved once again without a doubt that the United States is not a defender, but a disruptor of peace. As long as the United States nuclear aircraft carriers sail around the seas of our country, our nuclear deterrent can never be abandoned, but should rather be strengthened further. That is the lesson we have drawn.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea regards it as its noble duty as a Member State to safeguard peace and security and promote socio-economic development and common prosperity in and around the Korean peninsula. Had it not been for the powerful war deterrent built by the Songun politics of the great leader of our people, General Kim Jong Il, the Korean peninsula would have already been turned into a battlefield scores of times, thus destroying regional peace and stability.

A peaceful environment is most urgently needed for the Government and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as they are now concentrating all efforts on economic development in order to open the gate for a powerful and prosperous State in 2012, which marks the centennial anniversary of the birth of the great leader, President Kim Il Sung. This year, which falls on the sixtieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea again proposed respectfully to the parties to the Armistice Agreement to begin talks as early as possible with a view to replacing the Armistice Agreement with a peace agreement. If that proposal is realized, the General Assembly will see the implementation of its historic resolution adopted 35 years ago. The conclusion of a peace agreement will represent the most effective confidence-building measure for removing distrust among the parties to the Armistice and serve as a powerful driving force

guaranteeing the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

There is no change in the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in its opposition to nuclear war, the nuclear arms race and nuclear proliferation. The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is the policy goal maintained consistently by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for peace and security in North-East Asia and the denuclearization of the world. The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, referred to in the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks issued on 19 September 2005, means the process of turning the whole Korean peninsula into a nuclear-weapon-free zone by completely eliminating the real external nuclear threats on the Korean peninsula in a verifiable manner. As already clarified, our nuclear weapons do not serve as a means to attack or threaten others, but as a self-defensive deterrent, for all intents and purposes, to counter aggression and attacks from outside.

As a responsible nuclear-weapon State, we are willing to join in the international efforts for nuclear non-proliferation and the safe management of nuclear material on an equal footing with other nuclear-weapon States. It is the long-cherished desire of the entire Korean nation to put an end to the history of disgraceful division forced upon it by foreign forces and to live peacefully on a reunified land.

In the new century, important progress towards reconciliation, common prosperity and reunification has been achieved in inter-Korean relations. The historic inter-Korean summit between the North and the South in 2000 and its resultant adoption of the joint declaration of 15 June, followed by another inter-Korean summit in 2007 and the publication of the declaration of 4 October, constitute a good programme for reunification, unprecedented in our national history. Those historic declarations were welcomed and warmly supported by the United Nations General Assembly.

Unfortunately, the present South Korean authorities reject this grand reunification programme and are driving inter-Korean relations towards a rupture by bringing forward the so-called "three-phase unification proposal", which is anti-reunification and confrontational. They are stepping up an atmosphere of war against their fellow countrymen in collusion with foreign forces with a view to rationalizing their confrontational policy against the North. The anti-reunification forces have no place on the Korean peninsula and, as such, the anti-peace forces should not be offered a place in the international community. In the future, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will thoroughly implement the joint declaration of 15 June and the declaration of 4 October, and thus achieve the reconciliation and unity of the nation, which will surely open a new era of independent reunification, peace and prosperity.

The ideal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's foreign policy is independence, peace and friendship. It accords with the ideas of the United Nations. In accordance with that ideal, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will further strengthen and develop friendly and cooperative relations with all Member States and fully discharge its responsibilities for ensuring peace and security in the Korean peninsula and the rest of the world.

In conclusion, my delegation totally rejects the provocative statement delivered by the South Korean delegation on 25 September (see A/65/PV.17), which referred to the *Cheonan* incident again and distorted the presidential statement of the Security Council of 9 July 2010 (S/PRST/2010/13 and S/PV.6355). The truth of the *Cheonan* incident is still under cover. The results of the unilateral investigation of South Korea, have raised one doubt after another since its release, following scientific military analysis and growing manifold criticism inside and outside South Korea. The South Korean authorities have persistently refused to accept our proposal to send a field inspection group for scientific and objective verification of the truth of the incident.

The Security Council, in its presidential statement dated 9 July 2010, took note of responses from other relevant parties, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which has stated that it had nothing to do with the incident and encouraged the settlement of all outstanding issues by peaceful means to resume direct dialogue and negotiations. South Korea is advised not to create tension on the Korean peninsula by waging war exercises with outside forces and pursuing a confrontational approach in defiance of the concerns of the international community. It should immediately embark on North-South dialogue so as to find solutions to all outstanding issues, as recommended by the presidential statement of the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vitaly Churkin, head of the delegation of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The current, sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly has started with an unprecedented number of events covering the full range of the most topical international issues. It is encouraging that, in the light of the numerous challenges facing mankind, a positive unified platform for collective action has been taking shape, with the United Nations playing the central role. Having learned from the dramatic events of recent decades and having realized that attempts to cut the Gordian knot by force in violation of the Charter will only lead to deadlock, the international community has concluded that there is no alternative but to address political, economic and other problems through joint efforts based on international law. And the United Nations provides a universal platform to strengthen this positive trend in international relations.

The Security Council is a key instrument of this Organization to maintain international peace and security. The high-level Security Council meeting held on 23 September (S/PV.6389) reaffirmed its members' intention to enhance that body's efficiency, not only through direct involvement in conflict settlement but also by creating prerequisites for the non-recurrence and prevention of crises. This proves that the comprehensive approach to ensuring international security is gaining ground, as it reflects modern realities and is based on the principles and provisions of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations faces unprecedented, serious and multifaceted tasks in the key area of peacekeeping. While paying tribute to the efforts and sacrifice of thousands of men and women Blue Helmets, joint efforts should continue to refine the theory and practice of peacekeeping under United Nations auspices and to improve the quality of planning and the conduct of peacekeeping operations with adequate political control by the Security Council.

It is encouraging that the United Nations is working towards this goal on a truly collective basis. Member States have quite a few constructive ideas on their table, which include Russia's initiative to revitalize the Military Staff Committee in order to improve the military expertise of Security Council decisions.

This year has been marked by progress in nuclear disarmament. The 2010 Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed by the Presidents of Russia and the United States in Prague, is a real contribution by our two countries to strengthening international security and strategic stability. It is also the result of positive changes in the relations between Russia and the United States that have placed Russian-American interaction in world affairs on a qualitatively new level.

We hope that the strong impetus provided by Moscow and Washington to the nuclear disarmament process will be followed similarly by all nations, primarily by nuclear-weapon States.

Pursuant to Russia's policy towards strengthening the United Nations role in global security, disarmament and confidence-building, we intend to table three draft resolutions during the current General Assembly session: one on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, co-sponsored with China; a draft resolution on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security; and a Russia-United States co-sponsored draft resolution on bilateral strategic offensive arms reductions and the new framework for strategic relations. We call for their adoption by consensus.

The universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its guaranteed strict implementation comprise the cornerstone of a strengthened international non-proliferation regime. In that context, the search must continue for an effective solution to the Iranian nuclear problem on the basis of NPT provisions and the norms of international Law. The Iranian side must ensure the requisite level of transparency and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is acting on behalf of the international community with the Security Council's support.

Clarifying the outstanding questions about the Iranian nuclear programme would not only meet the goal of strengthening the non-proliferation regime but would also quite obviously promote the interests of Iran. Russia sees no reasonable alternative to a political and diplomatic settlement of the Iranian nuclear

problem through constructive dialogue between Tehran and the six countries involved. The meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the six countries in New York helped to consolidate the shared intention to ensure the earliest resumption of such a dialogue. We will continue to do our utmost to achieve this goal.

As far as the sanctions instrument is concerned, sanctions are not a goal in themselves. The objective of the sanctions regime established by the Security Council is to signal to Iran that it must fully cooperate with IAEA, and to give an impetus to the negotiating process. All members of the international community must show solidarity based on mutual responsibility. We strongly reject a situation in which unilateral decisions — including ex-territorial ones that undermine the very foundation of further joint efforts — are made with regard to sanctions in parallel to collective efforts by the United Nations Security Council. We must put an end to that practice, which runs counter to international law and has negative political effects.

Even more obvious, the economic and financial trade blockade of Cuba, whose lifting the General Assembly has demanded for a number of years, is clearly an anachronism. The codification of the principle of equal and indivisible security is indispensable to productive international efforts in this field, which is the precise goal of President Medvedev's initiative to conclude a treaty on European security. The proposal targets the complete transition of Euro-Atlantic policy from its old Cold War agenda to a new one, as well as a firm legal foundation for the principle of indivisible security for all in the Euro-Atlantic region proclaimed in the 1990s. We welcome the substantive dialogue on this important Russian initiative, which has started in various international forums.

A comprehensive settlement in the Middle East would make a crucial contribution towards strengthened global stability. The parties must demonstrate political will and extend every effort to promote the success of the resumed direct Palestinian-Israeli talks. The results of the ministerial Quartet meeting of major international mediators held on 21 September demonstrated that appropriate support to the Israelis and Palestinians will continue, but the ultimate responsibility for a successful outcome rests with them.

In this connection, the decision by the Israeli authorities to not extend the moratorium on Israeli settlement activities has raised serious concern. A way out of the current impasse should be found so as to ensure that negotiations continue. Our proposal to hold an international conference on the Middle East in Moscow is aimed at advancing the Middle East settlement. This proposal has gained the support of all interested parties and the United Nations Security Council. If the direct Palestinian-Israeli dialogue becomes stable, the preparations for the Moscow forum can get under way, which should also substantively examine the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, as well as the prospects for the multilateral aspects of the Middle East settlement.

The development of a comprehensive strategy to address the interconnected problems of the Middle East is on the agenda. It is necessary to continue working towards an international conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East, pursuant to the decision of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Russia supports the international strategy for a comprehensive settlement and for post-conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan adopted by the Kabul Conference, which envisages a stage-by-stage transfer of responsibility for the situation in that country to Afghan authorities, as effective governing structures are established in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The future of Afghanistan must be determined by the Afghan people themselves. The international community must continue to provide its assistance, with an important role being played by the United Nations.

Lasting stabilization in Afghanistan and throughout the region will be impossible without resolving the drug problem. The dimension of the danger posed by narcotics emanating from Afghanistan represents a clear threat to international peace and stability and requires more resolute actions throughout the entire chain of the production and proliferation of narcotics — from the destruction of drug crops to the suppression of precursor supplies, including drug traffickers on the sanction lists of the Security Council. It is also necessary to move to a new level of international cooperation. Russia's initiative to establish financial and counter-narcotics security belts

along the perimeter of Afghan's borders is consistent with those goals.

The regional dimension of the long-term stabilization of Afghanistan is becoming ever more topical. To that end, we must fully engage the potential of relevant organizations that are actively working in close contact with Kabul on Afghan issues, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The settlement process in the Sudan is approaching an important milestone. As the date of referendum on the self-determination of the South of that country draws closer, the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement must redouble their efforts to overcome the problems that still divide them. We should also give new impetus to the Darfur settlement process. At stake is the stability of conditions in the Sudan and throughout the vast African continent. We welcome the constructive attitude demonstrated by the Sudanese and other participants in the high-level meeting on the Sudan that was held here recently.

In Somalia, the confrontation continues between the Transitional Federal Government, supported by the international community, and extremists and terrorist groups linked with Al-Qaida. The lack of a settlement on land is fuelling the problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia. A more resolute pursuit of the political process and stronger assistance to the peacekeeping operation of the African Union and further counter-piracy efforts, including the criminal prosecution of pirates, are priorities in international efforts on the Somali track, as reiterated during the recent mini-summit on Somalia, which Russia fully supports.

The results of the Millennium Development Goals summit have reaffirmed the important role of the United Nations on development matters and must help mobilize political support and financial resources for the timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). That requires joint efforts by Governments, international financial and trade institutions, the private sector and civil society, based on the principles of global partnership and shared responsibility.

It is obvious that most global problems, including the achievement of the MDGs, cannot be resolved without engaging innovations, advanced technologies and modernization solutions. The same is valid for such challenges as climate change, energy and food security and the fight against diseases. The engagement of the enormous potential of the United Nations, its family and system of specialized agencies in this area will allow the Organization to become a catalyst in the establishment and development of multilateral modernization alliances. Russia is prepared to participate actively in that work.

To live up to expectations, the United Nations must continuously renew itself. The reform of the Organization is progressively moving forward. This year, the negotiations on strengthening system-wide coherence were completed successfully. In particular, the new important United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women has been established.

Negotiations will continue at the current session of the General Assembly on the expansion of the composition of the Security Council. This is an extremely important issue on the reform agenda of the Organization, involving the interests of the overwhelming majority of States. For that reason, the final formula for Security Council reform should be based on compromise and the broadest possible agreement in the United Nations. This requirement is also fully applicable to all other aspects of United Nations reform.

This year marks the sixty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, as well as that of the end of the Second World War, from the ashes of which the world Organization was born. For the sake of the memory of the millions of victims and in order to prevent a repetition of such scourges, we must suppress attempts to falsify the events associated with that historic calamity. That is the aim of a well-known Russian initiative in the United Nations. We count on the broadest support for a draft resolution on the topic.

The United Nations is our common and unique Organization. It is up to all of us to determine how productive and really useful its future work will be for humankind. By pulling our efforts together, we will be able to renew the United Nations effectively and provide it with all the necessary resources. We are convinced that reasonable resources spent on that goal will bring tangible dividends to all members of the international community in the form of durable peace, security, cooperation and prosperity all over the globe.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.